MoLeNET transforming teaching and learning in colleges and schools

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What is MoLeNET?

A deliberate attempt to move mobile learning from R&D into mainstream teaching and learning

Significant investment by Learning & Skills Council and colleges/schools

Supported shared cost projects not just money for equipment and get on with it

Aims to improve teaching, learning,learner outcomes; assess effectiveness of m-learning; build m-learning & m-learning research expertise capacity

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What is mobile learning?

Exploitation of **ubiquitous handheld** (or very portable) hardware and **wireless and mobile networks** to facilitate, support, enhance and extend the reach of **teaching and learning**

The learner may or may not be mobile.

MoLeNET numbers

- 3 years
- £16m+ investment
- Nearly 40,000 learners
- Around 7,000 staff

Capital funding availability enabled

- Relatively risk free experimentation

- Large enough scale to demonstrate impact

- Senior management support

- Kudos to get things done

- Ability to concentrate on pedagogy and continuing professional development without "and who's going to pay for the kit" worries

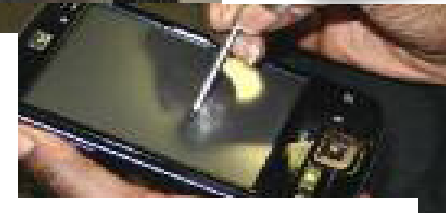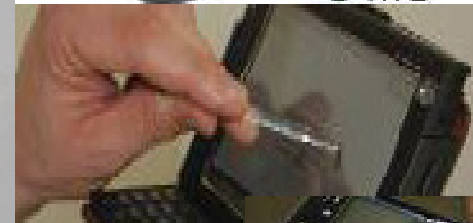# What it paid for

Capital:

- New/improved wireless networks & infrastruture

- Handheld technologies...

College/schools contribution:

- Support programme
  - Training, advice, mentoring, on-line community
    - knowledge/resource sharing, peer-to-peer support

- Research and Evaluation

Focus of research

- How colleges/schools use mobile learning to improve teaching and learning

- The impact of mobile learning on learners, teachers and institutions

- Can mobile learning help improve retention, progression and achievement?

MoLeNET Research

- Practitioner led action research
- Project manager reports
- Individual Student Record (ILR) data
- Case studies
- SMS learner and teacher surveys
- Pre & post M-maturity surveys
- Learner voice videos
- Teacher voice videos
- Autumn term case studies

Why Action Research?

AR is especially relevant as MoLeNET aims include a desire **not merely to observe the impact** of introducing mobile learning **but to actively contribute** to:

- bringing about improvements in teaching, learning and learner experiences

- increasing the number and skills of practitioners involved in implementing/evaluating mobile learning

Messages and research findings from MoLeNET years 1 & 2

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What was the mobile technology used for?

What is mobile learning good for?

In & around college/school

- As well as not instead of teachers and books

- Personal mobile allows differentiation

- Instant feedback to teacher

- Instant just in time research

- Individual private learning/additional support

- Collaborative, constructivist learning

- Data collection – pictures, video, audio, data

- Pod/vodcasts for catch up and revision

- Learner generated and sharing multimedia

Essential to have

- Adequate staff development and support

- Co-operative and supportive IT staff

- Time for staff to experiment, plan and become confident

- An understanding that there is no one-size-fits-all solution

- Appropriate pedagogy and materials - not just the same old stuff squeezed smaller

Workbased learners

- Better access to learning technology at work
- Better standard of coursework completed more quickly
- Better tools for gathering evidence of learning
- More relevant and enjoyable assessment
- Better tutor/learner communication
- Feel better supported and more part of a learning community
- Better employer engagement

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Engaging reluctant learners/NEETs

- Easier to take technology enhanced learning outside for reluctant learners to try

- Learning more interesting, enjoyable, engaging, tailored to different learning preferences/styles, more relevant/modern

- Recognition of teenage and young adult learners mobile and gaming technology skills raises their confidence and self esteem

- Improved **not** worse behaviour

Less learner drop out

All MoLeNET learners predicted retention rate

Compared with

LSC in-year learner retention previous year
+7.5%

(year 2)

Some individual institutions report greater improvement for some learner groups

Why?

Why better learner retention? e.g:

Mobile learning has had the biggest impact on retention...mobile learning has... provided a more engaged learning environment where learners, because they're so active in their learning, want to be involved and the motivation factor has gone up tenfold.

Exeter College

Impact on Learner Achievement

'Achieved' + 'Partially achieved' results:

Year 2 MoLeNET learners predicted 2008/09

compared with

Whole sector achievement rates 2007/08

+ 13.4%

And less 'no achievement'

Some colleges/schools report big improvements for some learner groups, e.g:

"...we only had a 50% success rate, but [using mobiles] enabling research during sessions, in studios and in lecture theatres and having question and answer sessions etc, it's raised the success rate by over 50% (based on 50% of the 50) so a 75% success rate."

Leeds College of Art & Design

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What vocational learners thought of using
Sony PSP

Year 3 focus

Dictated by the economic and social climate:

- Employment/employability
- Institutional holistic change
- Sustainability

Economic recovery and regeneration

To help recovery, and for the country to thrive when recovery comes, we need:

- To minimise the number of people who are dependent upon state aid

- Workers with up-to-date skills

- and good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills

- Well qualified and motivated young people

Adult workers

Current and forecast economic climate means:

- job losses and job insecurity

- more retraining needed

- calls for greater efficiency

- Fewer staff, difficult to release for training

- Cost cutting means training budgets often cut

Powerful, portable ICT provides convenient, personalised, just in time, cost effective situated learning and learner support

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Young people

- Unemployment highest for 16-25s and worryingly high number of young people not in education, employment and training

- Compulsory education/training to 18 planned

- Many did not succeed at school

- many not performing well/unhappy at school

Technologies they enjoy using socially can also make learning interesting, seem more relevant to their lives and feel less like learning they didn't/don't like at school

Sustainable Mobile Learning

- Convince senior management of cost/benefits
- Provide good wireless infrastructure, sensibly address security and safety and allow and enable learners to use their own technologies
- Switching investment from static computing
- Loans/assisted purchase schemes for learners
- More government/local authority funding would speed up realisation of benefits
- Mobile functionality increasing & prices falling

For more information about MoLeNET go to:
www.molenet.org.uk

For case studies & resources go to MoLeShare

To find/share video resources go to MoLeTV

MoLeNET annual conference – Sep/Oct 2010